

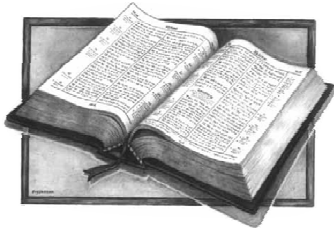
Diligently Seeking God (Hebrews 11:6)

PRAIRIE VILLAGE CHURCH OF CHRIST
4616 VALLEY STATION ROAD

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Scripture of the Week



Philippians 1:9-11

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

When the Apostle Paul wrote this letter to encourage the Christians living in the city of Philippi, he let them know that he thanked God for them every time they entered his mind, and that he made mention of them in all of his prayers (verses 3-4). He then went on to tell the Philippians about a special prayer that he prayed specifically for them. He prayed that their love would grow stronger and that this love would be based on ever increasing knowledge and discernment. Paul wanted only the best things for his loved ones, and he knew that a better understanding of the truth would make them wiser, and would produce a dynamic love for God and man within them. He also prayed that they would strive to be sincere, blameless and

righteous. If these virtues prevailed in their hearts, the result would be peace and harmony in their lives, and glory and praise to God. In short, the Apostle prayed excellence for these brothers and sisters in Christ—that they would “*approve the things that are excellent.*” No finer prayer could be offered for anyone, and that’s exactly what God wants for all of His children. He wants us to not be satisfied with spiritual mediocrity, but to pursue excellence in all things. Striving and praying daily for love, knowledge, wisdom, sincerity, harmlessness and righteousness will serve to strengthen our faith and help provide the most blessed kind of life on earth. Paul did the praying, the Holy Spirit did the revealing, we must do the pursuing.

Pleasing God

In Numbers chapter 13 we read the story of Moses sending spies into the land of Canaan. Per God’s directives, he selected 12 men, one from each tribe of Israel, and instructed them to go see what the land and the people and the cities were like. He also told them to bring back some of the fruit of the land if possible (verses 18-20). When the spies returned and gave a report of their findings, they created quite an uproar. Two of them walked into the camp toting a single cluster of grapes so large, they had to fasten it to a pole in order to carry it. The physical evidence showed that it was a good land indeed—one that flowed with milk and honey just as God had promised. But the verbal report was to

the contrary. Ten of the spies said the land devoured its inhabitants and that giants lived there who dwarfed them in size (verses 32-33). When the people heard this exaggerated report, they cried out in despair and wept the whole night through (14:1). They grumbled against Moses and Aaron and said it would have been better to have died in Egypt. They then decided to select a new leader to guide them back to the land of their savage enslavement (14:2-4). What God’s people failed to consider throughout this whole sinful mutiny was that they were actually complaining and rebelling against the Lord and not Moses and Aaron. Joshua and Caleb tried to encourage the people to be brave and

faithful. They said: “*The land which we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord is pleased with us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us — a land which flows with milk and honey. Only do not rebel against the Lord*” (14:7-9). This story was included in God’s word to teach us some valuable lessons. We must be careful to never let fear or pressure lead us to unfaithfulness. God punishes disobedience severely as these rebels learned first hand. Of the people over age 19, only the two faithful men were allowed to enter the Land of Promise. If we want to inherit God’s promises, our number one goal in life must be to please Him (2 Corinthians 5:9-10).